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Folder: Iran 10/1/72-12/31/72

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PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 21, 2006

Iran

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

October 20, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE FILES

SUBJECT:

Correspondence to the President
from Nasser G. Afshar, Editor,
Iran Free Press

On September 18, Afshar again wrote the White House, this time requesting a reply to his September 1 letter to the President which he attached in copy form. Afshar also attached a copy of the Aug/Sept edition of his Iran Free Press. As shown on page 2, Afshar had published his letter to the President.

We recommend no reply to Afshar. For reasons outlined in my Memorandum for the Files of April 26, 1972, we and the Shah consider this organization (possibly a one-man operation) offensive.

H. S.
Harold H. Saunders

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FREE IRAN!

(Committee for the Freedom of Iran)



FREE IRAN!

FREEDOM OF PRESS
FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY
FREEDOM OF SPEECH
END OF POLICE STATE

FRANKLIN STATION
OFFICE BOX 883
PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20044

September 1, 1972

President Richard M. Nixon
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President:

In the July edition of the Iran Free Press, the Committee for Free Iran, on behalf of the Iranian government-in-exile, demanded that the Soviet Union remove its advisors from Iran. We made this demand for three compelling reasons.

1. There is no military threat to Iran. Excluding only the Soviet Union itself, all of Iran's neighbors share with Iran a common religion and a tradition of mutual trust and cooperation.

2. The Soviet staff in Iran has grown to some five thousand persons, a number too large to be effectively monitored, and posing a significant threat of political and economic influence. We feel the present Iranian government courts disaster by allowing this potential for meddling to grow unchecked.

3. The Soviet Union has several Middle East objectives not in accord with the interests of the Iranian people. The Russians, having already acquired unlimited natural gas rights, seek an exclusive claim on the Iranian oil fields. They seek as well to supplant the American and British military and economic presence with their own, and to expand Soviet sway to the Persian Gulf and beyond.

It may seem that these considerations, directed as they were at Soviet policy, have little direct bearing on the policies of the United States. This is not, however, the case. The government-in-exile believes strongly in the principle of Iranian neutrality. It is a cornerstone of its program for progress that Iran, while a free and democratic nation, be part of an effective buffer between the communist bloc and the Western free world. In this light, we must note that the most visible outside military and economic support for the present Iranian government is not the Soviet Union but the United States. In particular, although the Soviet Union has some five thousand of its citizens working in Iran as so-called advisors, only about thirty of these are clearly military advisors. The

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United States, on the other hand, has nearly eight hundred military advisors officially assigned to the Iranian armed forces.

The United States, under your administration, has embarked on a policy of reducing the American military presence throughout the world. We applaud this objective. We feel the grand design of which it is a key part portends a better and safer life for the people of America and of the world. An immediate implementation of this policy, in the removal from Iran of all non-diplomatic American personnel, is both possible and desirable. We strongly urge upon the United States that this step be taken.

Neutrality is an important goal for us. The demand we make of the American government we have made equally of other nations, including the Soviet Union. We seek the removal of non-essential, non-diplomatic personnel in the employ of any foreign power, whether communist or free. And most emphatically we seek the cessation of all military aid, from whatever source, to the present Iranian government. Iran must find itself; it must discover its freedom, its creative and industrious spirit, and its future political and social direction unhindered by outside powers.

Revolution will come to Iran. The people grow daily more weary of billions spent by the Shah's government on armaments while seven out of eight Iranians starve. But until revolution occurs, let us point out that it is a clear moral wrong for the United States or any other party to advise Shah Pahlavi to spend hard earned exchange currency on weapons, unneeded and ludicrously expensive, to guide his choice, and moreover to back this choice with personnel, when most families in Iran must survive on less than two dollars per day. Such actions by the United States are in direct and obvious conflict with America's humanitarian ideals.

The Shah has perhaps his own reasons for spending huge sums of money on weapons. Perhaps he intends a campaign of military adventurism; or perhaps the reasons are only medical and psychiatric, rooted in Pahlavi paranoia. But one fact is clear. When the people rise up against the monarchy, Shah Pahlavi will use every force at his command to suppress the bid for freedom; he will use without distinction all the weapons supplied by the United States, all the weapons supplied by the Soviet Union, every force at his disposal. Those nations that have helped supply these forces must share the blame for the needless bloodshed that may accompany the surge for Iranian freedom.

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We appreciate that ultimately the United States, as any other nation, must conduct its affairs first and always for the good of its own people. But the United States, as the strongest military and economic power in world history bears an unusual burden, and must conduct its affairs with uncommon restraint, recognizing the needs of far weaker nations.

We know that the United States has long maintained good relations with the present Shah. As long as the U.S. continues this support of militarism and suppression, our quarrel with American policy runs deep. The efforts of all true searchers for freedom in Iran are eroded, and the risks of greater violence and of communist takeover in the inevitable revolution to end the Shah's rule, become ever more menacing.

But we emphatically believe that U.S. activities have been carried out with good intentions and in good faith. We cling to the hope that American policy may yet change, and that the long standing tradition of friendship between the Iranian and American peoples may yet guide America to rejection of the present undemocratic and corrupt monarchy.

Please hear our plea, spoken only with the voice of our words for freedom and of our hearts yearning for freedom, for cessation of military and political support to the Shah, and for the removal of non-diplomatic personnel. Continued good relations between the United States and the new government for Iran may well hinge on your answer.

Thank you for taking time to consider this matter carefully.

Sincerely,

Nasser G. Afshar
Chairman
Committee for Free Iran

NGA:jap